

Message Text

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45

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

NIC-01 NEA-10 GAC-01 TRSE-00 MBFR-03 SAJ-01 OMB-01

ACDA-19 RSR-01 /129 W

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R 061555 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3525

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

COPENHAGEN 576

AMEMBASSY OSLO

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0367

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR IC

SUBJECT: ICELANDIC DEFENSE FORCE (IDF) RETENTION ISSUE:
CONVERSATIONS WITH SWISS AMBASSADOR AND ROMANIAN
AMBASSADOR

1. DURING THE WEEK SWISS AMBASSADOR HUNZIKER (RESIDENT IN
OSLO) AND ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR PLOESTENAU (RESIDENT IN COPEN-
HAGEN) CALLED ON ME.

2. HUNZIKER SAID HE ASKED FONMIN AGUSTSSON FOR A STATUS
REPORT ON IDF ISSUE. HE SAID FONMIN REPLIED NO DECISION
MADE YET; THAT GOVT WAS DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE; THAT IT WAS
EVIDENT THERE WAS NO MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT FOR CLOSING THE
BASE BUT THAT NEVERTHELESS TWO MEMBERS OF THE GOVT (COMMUNISTS)
WERE APPLYING PRESSURE ON THE GOVT TO CARRY OUT THE ORIGINAL
PLATFORM COMMITMENT TO CLOSE THE BASE. FONMIN ALSO SAID HIS
OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY WAS DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE. HUNZIKER SAID
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FONMIN MADE IT CLEAR TO HIM THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS OPPOSED TO THE BASE CLOSING BUT HE HAD TO COME UP WITH A FORMULA FOR MODIFICATIONS OF THE BASE AGREEMENT OR BASE OPERATIONS. THERE WAS NO DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE PRO- IDF ELEMENTS WITHIN THE GOVT ON THE NEED FOR MODIFICATIONS. FONMIN TOLD HUNZIKER THE PROBLEM HE FACES IS HOW FAR HE CAN PRESS THE AMERICANS ON MODIFICATIONS WITHOUT IMPAIRING THE DEFENSE OF ICELAND AND THE NATO ALLIANCE. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION BY HUNZIKER ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACT ON ICELAND IF THE BASE CLOSED, THE FONMIN REPLIED THE IMPACT WOULD BE TOO MINOR TO BE CONSIDERED A FACTOR FOR RETENTION OF THE BASE.

3. HUNZIKER SAID HE TOLD FONMIN DURING CONVERSATION THAT IN SWITZERLAND WHEN ONE HAS A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN AND WANTS TO PROTECT IT, ONE PUTS A FENCE AROUND IT. HE ASKED THE FONMIN WHAT ICELAND'S FENCE WOULD BE IF THE DEFENSE FORCE LEFT. HE ALSO SAID HE TOLD FONMIN THAT THE NORWEGIANS FEEL IT IS ESSENTIAL THE IDF BE RETAINED IN ICELAND.

4. THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR SPENT HIS ENTIRE CALL TELLING ME HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS FOR THE US TO SUCCEED IN THE MBFR AND FOR THE US NOT TO MAKE UNILATERAL TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM EUROPE. HE SAID HIS COUNTRY'S POSITION WAS THAT BOTH SOVIET AND AMERICAN TROOPS SHOULD WITHDRAW INTO THEIR OWN COUNTRIES BUT AS LONG AS SOVIET TROOPS ARE IN OTHER COUNTRIES THE AMERICAN TROOPS SHOULD ALSO REMAIN. WHEN I ASKED HIM IF HE CARED TO EXPRESS A VIEW ON THE IDF RETENTION ISSUE, HE REMARKED THAT ALTHOUGH THIS MATTER IS ONE FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN ICELAND AND THE US, HIS REMARKS ABOUT AMERICAN TROOPS IN EUROPE WERE ALSO APPLICABLE TO AMERICAN TROOPS IN ICELAND.

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